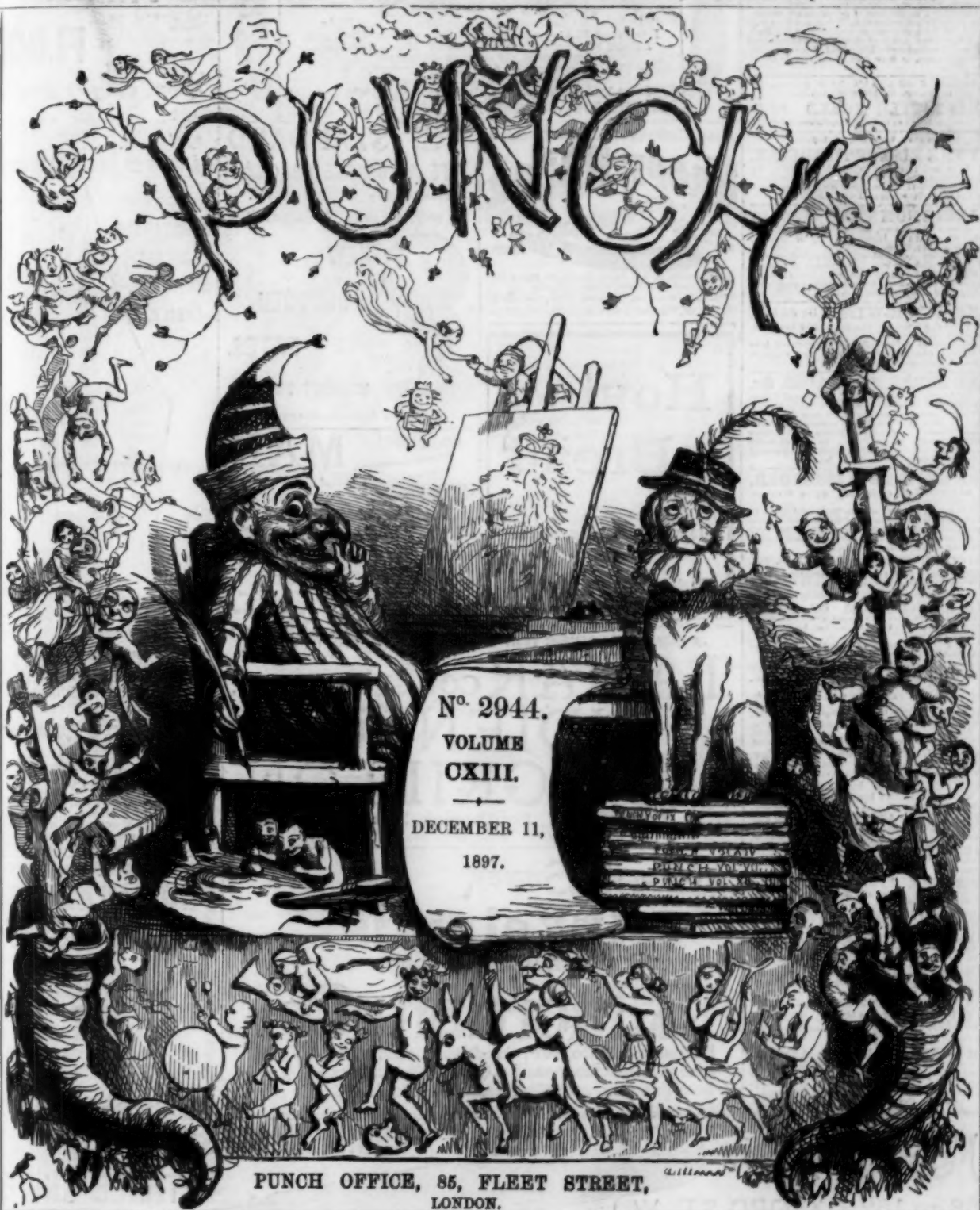


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CHOCOLAT MENIER *For Breakfast*



RISKY

Mr. O'Fluke (whose shooting has been a bit wild). "VERY ODD, ROBINS, THAT I DON'T HIT ANYTHING!"
Robins (dodging muzzle). "AH, BUT A'M AFRAID IT'S OWER GOOD LUCK TO CONTINUE, SIR!"

THE PERIL OF POETRY. A NATIONAL SCANDAL.

DEAR MR. PUNCH,—I have read with much interest the correspondence from eminent literary men which has recently appeared in your columns, but I confess the idea of an Academy, or as you more correctly name it, *Ménagerie of Letters*, has quite lost favour with me since no single list that has yet appeared contains the name which is signed at the bottom of this letter. This fact speaks volumes for the taste of the British public, and, *me jūdice*, damns the scheme utterly.

I should like, however, to call your attention to a suggestion made by a well-known contemporary of yours, from across the Border. The *Glasgow Herald*, in a masterly article, advocates "the State endowment of accredited poetical genius as a means of preventing poetry from being starved out of existence"—a fate, Sir, of which Poetry and I stand in direst danger. And why? The *Herald* puts the whole case in a nutshell: "There is not the same national demand for poetry that there was thirty or forty years ago." I go further. I say there is no demand! Why, Sir, at the present moment I have twenty-three epics lying in my desk, and I can't get one of them printed! It is incredible, but true, and if you doubt it, I will send them to 85, Fleet Street (but regret I can't pay carriage) that you may see for yourself. [We take your word for it.—ED.] I have known people indignant because MILTON got but £5 for his *Paradise Lost*. Lucky MILTON! I can't get five pence, let alone five pounds, for my *Logroliad*, which I consider infinitely superior in every way to the mythico-theologico-metaphysical lucubrations of the Puritan.

Now, Sir, you will, I know, agree with me that it would be a public calamity if Poetry and I should perish. How prevent it? Thus. Adopt the suggestion of the *Glasgow Herald*. Let the State offer me a pension of, say, £500 a year, and, proud as I am, I will swallow my pride to prevent such a national scandal.

Yours, &c.,

DANTE POPE JONES.

5, Grub Street, Three-pair Back.

A CANDIDATE FOR THE VICTORIA CROSS.—The football referee.

THE LADIES' MILE.

"THERE'S a tempting bit of greenery, of rus in urbe scenery"—
Its praises HENRY LEIGH sang long ago;
Now we tell another story, for its undivided glory
Once departed, for a while, from Rotten Row.

In her never-failing passion for a novel hobby, Fashion
Made decree that riding bikes should be "the thing";
Horses stayed at home unheeded, by the cycles superseded,
And the Row was then supplanted by the Ring.

There's a charming bit of "flat," you know, between Achilles'
statue
And the Powder Magazine, which I shall style—
With a licence all poetic, and a note apologetic—
Yet with reason, too, I think—"The Ladies' Mile."

Oh, the times that I have been there, and the types that I have
seen there

Of the real and imaginary swell,
And the scores of pretty riders, both patricians and outsiders,
Are considerably more than I can tell.

But of all things I remember one fine morning, in December,
Clear for ever in my memory must dwell,
When I leant against the railing watching skilful riders sailing
Up and down, and wobbling novices as well.

Then I brought away one image from that fashionable scrimmage
Of the sweetest and divinest little face,
And that vision of perfection in my constant recollection
In my thoughts and in my dreams will find a place.

Did I hate the little boulder in the train that gathered round
her?

Did I look on his presumption as a crime?
She was smiling on him, sweetly, as she rode along so neatly,
Though she evidently loathed him all the time.

Oh, the hours that I have wasted, the regrets that I have tasted,
Since I saw her there for all too brief a while!
For the fact there's no concealing that she won my heart
a-wheeling

That December morn along the Ladies' Mile!

"TIS AN ILL WIND," &c.—The recent gale will have had, it is to be hoped, at least one good effect. The telegraphic communication between Calais and Dover ought to occupy only a few minutes, and thus a message sent and received in so short a time would avert a catastrophe. As a matter of fact, such a message, instead of going straight to Dover, has to pass that town and be taken up to London, and then, when all formalities, whatever they may be, have been complied with, the message is wired back again to Dover. On Monday, November 29, according to the report in the *Times*, a telegram for Dover despatched from Calais at 10.25 A.M., was not received at Dover until 1.50 P.M.!! This is an example of "how not to do it" with a vengeance. It is to be hoped that the Post Office authorities will not show themselves "deaf as a Post" to the demands for improvements in this department.

THE DEFEAT OF DIGGLE.

(A New Reason for an Old Rhyme.)

HEY, DIGGLE, DIGGLE,
Progressives will giggle,
While Moderates moodily moon;
The Democrats laughed
To see such sport,
And the Ratepayers paid for the tune.

AN INTERPRETATION.—The following advertisement recently appeared in the *Daily Telegraph*:—

"LAD, respectable, WANTED, used to vice and file."

So here is to be found "some work," as Dr. WATTS long ago remarked, "for idle hands to do." We know what "rank and file" means; and here "vice" takes the place of "rank." Perhaps "file" may be the slang equivalent for the French *filer*; if so, the meaning evidently is that the lad accustomed to vice, i.e., the vicious lad, must also be able, after committing the vicious act, yclept of picking a pocket, to *filer vite*, that is, to "cut and run."



"CELUM, NON ANIMUM—"

[“The works of reference, required by Mr. GLADSTONE, have been forwarded to him in the South of France.”—*Daily Paper.*]

THE COMEDY OF CULIELMUS CÆSAR POTSDAMICUS.

1,000TH PERFORMANCE.

G. C. P. addresses His Parliament.

Reichstag! Preparatory to a shock
I now declare the session opened! *Hoch!*
Here in my red right hand I hold a scheme
For fortifying my superb régime:—
To execute a Navy, large and fine,
Worthy your Lord and his tremendous line,
In pure formality I ask the nation
To vote a thousand million marks.

[Sensation.]

Our noble army, you will understand,
Is limited to exercise on land;
And we have lately planted overseas
A pretty set of budding colonies;
Upon official maps I rather hope
You may remark them with a microscope.
To hold the highways thither nice and free
For fruits of German ingenuity,
To make our name, the Fatherland's and
Mine,
A holy terror on the heaving brine
Where now we roll in antiquated arks—
For this I want the paltry billion marks.

Two cruisers, you remember, went to
Crete:

I will not say the things were obsolete,
But still it cost the service quite a strain
To mobilise so many on the main.
And now we wish for even more than these
To vindicate the law in Eastern seas.
Matters have reached a critical condition
Due to an outrage on my German mission;
Such acts do not affect the Church alone,
But, what is more, they touch your

KAISER'S throne!

His slighted honour naturally burns
For vengeance in the form of quick returns,
Cash down—a couple of hundred thousand
taels,

With local rights for laying German rails,
Extinction of the conscious Mandarin,
An open port for hibernating in,
Two halters for the guilty when detected,
And one memorial *Dom* to be erected.

Supposing now that we were forced to
wreak

This kind of vengeance every other week;
Or say—to keep within the bounds of
reason—

They slew a brace of Teutons every season;
By roughly calculating China's size
The meanest intellect must recognise
That such a state of things would soon
entail

Activity upon a noble scale.
And since, again, the overlandish route
Is fraught with peril both from man and
brute,

Our safest course, for this and other trips,
Is to construct a lot of costly ships.

O *Reichstag!* standing on this sacred floor
Two years ago I positively swore
To keep, if needful, with my blood and
blade,

The realm my fathers gave me ready-made.
If now, with my immense domain inflated
In ways your WILLIAM scarcely contem-
plated,

I yield the deadlier duties to another,
It is to HENRY here, my only brother!
His life, his precious life, I freely stake,
The hardest sacrifice a man can make!
My part is done; your work, that waits
you still,
Is relatively light. You pay the bill.



Noble Amateur (to Model). "DO YOU EVER SIT TO ORDINARY ARTISTS?"

"The Polite Letter-Writer."

A NEW manual of the Epistolary Art, showing how to conduct a political correspondence with courtesy, dignity, and good taste. By W. V. H-RC-RT and J-S-PH CH-MB-RL-N.

THE HUMMING PEST.

"Of nuisances that stir my bile,
Of creatures I detest,
There's one beyond all others vile"—
And that's the humming pest.
Morn, noon and night, indoors and out,
With scraps of tune he greets you,
You're always meeting him about,
He's humming when he meets you.

Self-satisfied he rolls his eyes,
And clears his beefy throat,
You learn—you would not otherwise—
That he's a man "of note."
No use, on seeing him, to fly,
He constantly defeats you,
He will not let you pass him by—
He's humming when he meets you.

However fine may be the voice
Which Heaven on him bestows,
His repertoire however choice,
I hate his humming "pose."
Whene'er he sees you come along,
He thoughtfully repeats you
Some sacred air or comic song—
He's humming when he meets you.
He'll hum "that thing of MENDEL-
SOHN'S,"
Some WAGNER leit motif,
Or bits of GRIGG or SIDNEY JONES,
With gusto past belief.
No jot for your distress he cares,
Remorselessly he treats you
To some of his confounded "airs"—
He hums whene'er he meets you.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ARTFUL.—We think your scheme for obtaining an appointment ingenious, though a trifle risky. The appointment you probably would get is one for seven years—in the stone-quarrying line, on the Dorset coast.



HER PHOTOGRAPH.

Mr. Popham. "OH, THIS ONE IS LOVELY! I WONDER WHAT SHE WOULD DO, IF I WERE TO PROPOSE FOR THE ORIGINAL?"
 Olive. "GIVE YOU THE NEGATIVE, PERHAPS!"

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

Jorlocks, M.F.H., who was the *Pickwick* of the hunting field, and the delightfully-original *Soapy Sponge*, both inimitably illustrated by JOHN LEECH, are a couple of sporting stories difficult to rival and hard to beat. Mr. FOX RUSSELL, however—the author's name has a decidedly sporting smack about it—comes forward with *The Haughtyshire Hunt* (BRADBURY, AGNEW, & Co.), a lively sporting story whose hero is nearer akin to *Jorlocks* than any character the Baron remembers to have seen in sporting fiction. And Mr. RUSSELL has had the good luck to be associated with Mr. R. J. RICHARDSON, whose method of illustration is entirely his own, whose accurately-drawn horses and riders in action are "full of go," but whose figures and situations are somewhat lacking in the quality of humour. That the "toned" page illustrations lose in effect as much as those in the *Jorlocks* and *Soapy Sponge* series gain by their colour, will, the Baron thinks, be the opinion of all who have the facilities at hand for making the comparison. Artistically, the majority of the drawings, even where they are somewhat hard, are admirable; while not a few of the single figures, as, for instance, that of *Will* the huntsman, are, from every point of view, except the humorous, perfect. The sporting adventures of Mr. Travers *Algernon Binkie*, from his first day's run with the Duke's hounds, when he is mounted on *Marmion*, to his steeplechase on *The Roman*, when *Marmion*, with *Ronald Dennison* up, wins, are genuinely amusing; while the scene in the Law Courts is a capital climax to the story. In his next sporting novel, the Baron trusts that Mr. FOX RUSSELL will carefully avoid the very old-fashioned descriptive nomenclature which he has adopted for his characters, as, for example, "*Haughtyshire*," "*Fitzquander*," "*Farmer Wintercabbage*," "*Karl Krackwhipz*," "*Rev. Geoffrey Jawbrother*," "*Lord Gravity*," "*Miss Lumpkin*," which are of the kind that, in bygone days, were to be found in some comedies,

most farces, and in bills of the play at Christmas-time, when, in order to swell the cast, the manager was wont to bestow humorous names on a variety of "supers" and small people, who were paid to be seen, but on no account to be heard, except collectively.

The World gives a fully-illustrated Christmas Number, containing two large pictures by Mr. BRYAN, crammed full of a lot of persons representing, as usual, "celebrities," who, on this occasion, have not the air of appearing in the least "at home." The double illustration is accompanied by a list of these eminent individuals; but it would have been more in keeping with Christmas-time to have issued it as a sort of "puzzle-picture," and to have offered a prize to anyone who should guess correctly the names of all the more-or-less celebrated individuals whose likenesses the artist had intended to represent.

As to the cards which Father Christmas leaves on us when he calls, there is quite an old-fashioned cheeriness of colour about MARCUS WARD & Co.'s Christmas cards, and if "it is humour you want," as Mr. BRANDON THOMAS used to say in *The Pantomime Rehearsal*, it is provided in the liveliest variations. The calendars and almanacs tell the coming year in the most artistic surroundings. Messrs. C. W. FAULKNER & Co.'s cards take Christmas a little more seriously in their exquisite platinotypes, of which some are worthy of a frame, and their calendars, especially "The Minuet" series, make the days dance in the "daintiest" possible fashion. If you ask this Firm, "What's your little game at Christmas?" they will reply, "Oh, ever so many novelties, including 'Association Football,' intended for drawing-room amusement!" As this announcement will startle grandmothers and domesticated elderly aunts, it is as well to explain that it is only a drawing-table edition of "Socker," that's all.

"It is now some 'sixty years since' *Pickwick* was published,"

writes the indefatigable and undefeated Dickensian student, Mr. PERCY FITZGERALD, in his latest book, entitled *Pickwickian Manners and Customs* (Roxburghe Press, Limited), "and it is still heartily appreciated." True: it is "still heartily appreciated" by those who enjoyed *Pickwick* when they were boys together; the girls never cared for it; but among those of a later time, dating, say, even so far back as the sixties, how many are there who care about *Pickwick*? while among those whose existence dates from 1878, for example, the Baron questions whether Mr. FITZGERALD will find one in thirty who may have tried to read *Pickwick* and failed, and not one in fifty who have "heartily appreciated" the immortal work. But, be this as it may, Mr. PERCY FITZGERALD's book on *Pickwickian Manners and Customs* will prove attractive and interesting to all who love their *Pickwick*. He has started a theory, no less plausible than ingenious, as to the probability that BOSWELL's *Life of Johnson* to a certain extent inspired DICKENS in the creation of Mr. *Pickwick* and his followers. To the Baron's thinking, Mr. FITZGERALD's chapter on "Boz" and "Bozzy" proves this beyond the possibility of doubt. The thanks of all genuine *Pickwickians* are due to Mr. FITZGERALD for this notable addition to the "Boz" classics.

My Baroness informs me that *Wild Kitty*, by L. T. MEADE (W. AND R. CHAMBERS), is a capital book for schoolgirls. *Kitty* leaves the "ould country" to be educated in a select English school. The primness of the genteel Briton proves upsetting to the Hibernian temperament, and this young lady, from a castle, apparently in the backwoods, gets into many a scrape. The "Hoorush!" and the "shillelagh" are, however, actually not among her accomplishments!

Elsie's Magician, by FRED WHISHAW, with many effective illustrations by LEWIS BAUMER (W. AND R. CHAMBERS), has no dealings in "magic and spells," but is a genuine golden man, who eventually discovers himself at the correct moment as the long-lost grandfather—"Which his name it was WALKER!" Good name for a wandering grand-parent.

Princess Sarah, and Other Tales, by JOHN STRANGE WINTER (WARD, LOCK & Co.), may possibly prove entertaining to the ordinary "maid of bashful fifteen," except that, perhaps, nowadays, observes my Baroness, "bashful fifteen" is extraordinary, for whom something stronger and more exciting may be required. The stories are rather commonplace, which is Strange for JOHN WINTER.

"By the author of *Tatterley*," set forth on the cover of a new book, is a phrase to conjure with. In *A Prince of Mischance* (HUTCHINSON), Mr. TOM GALLON has broken fresh ground. The household in the Professor's home by the seaside is full of living people, the Professor being a delightfully original person from whose company we part all too soon. All the characters in the story stand firmly forth, interest culminating in *Evelyn*. It would not be fair even to hint at the lines of her story, or the finely-conceived tragedy in which it closes. Readers of *Tatterley* will find no disappointment in making the acquaintance of the author's new essay.

THE BARON DE B.-W.

AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND A MYSTERY.—A Bottle of "Stickphast Paste" in magnificent morocco-leather case. "We saw it for a moment, but we think we see it now"—only we don't at this minute. One of the youngest and wisest of our office boys, since lost to sight, but to memory dear, was, it is reported, heard to declare, concerning the aforesaid paste, that "it was uncommon good if you were very hungry," and if, like the *Marchioness*, "you made believe very much." Neither that youngest and wisest official, nor the stickphast paste, has ever been seen again. But we must not conclude from this that the lad is a thorough-paste young rascal.

DECIDEDLY EXAGGERATED.—LORD BALFOUR o' Burleigh, in his speech at Glasgow, "offered Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT his humble congratulations on his having at last found a platform upon which he could stand," &c., &c. No! no! Sir WILLIAM is not so mightily heavy as to find any difficulty in getting the support of an ordinary platform of fairly liberal dimensions. Sir WILLIAM is big, but he is not *burly*.

GOOD OMEN FOR THE LONDON SCHOOL BOARD.—That this body should now be illumined by a Reay of light—and leading.

WANTED!—Strong man as President of the Reichsrath. Experience-fighter or chucker-out preferred. Good social position and salary. Permanency to suitable man. Must be used to black eyes. Doctors and raw beef supplied. Apply, stating qualifications, number of men knocked out, &c., &c., to Chief Clerk, Reichsrath, Vienna.



UP FOR THE CATTLE SHOW.

Old Style of Farmer.

"AYE, I BE GOING TO THE SHOW, THEN ON TO THE WAXWORKS, AND WIND UP AT THE ADELPHI."

New Style of Farmer.

"NOW, LET ME SEE. MUST HAVE A LOOK AT THE PICTURE SHOWS IN BOND STREET, CALL ON TAILOR, GET THE LATEST NECKTIE IN BURLINGTON ARCADE, LOOK IN AT THE EMPIRE. CATTLE SHOW! NEVER GO NEAR SUCH A PLACE!"

OUR ADVERTISERS.

It would be a pity not to rescue from oblivion such a delightful advertisement as the following, which appears in the *Church Times*—

"WANTED, two Ladies as COOK and HOUSEMAID, to share entire work of North Country Seaside Vicarage. Two children and resident governess. It salary required by both, state amount. Organ desirable in one."

Surely no lady would require a salary for the privilege of "sharing" the household duties in this charming retreat. An occasional peep at the Bass Rock or Flamborough Head would be ample remuneration combined with the delights of playing the organ *gratis*, and possibly managing a choir, and feeling that, after all, one was of some use in the world. Perhaps an aggrieved baronet, or even a needy viscount, might be induced to officiate as gardener-coachman for a similarly nominal salary in this philanthropic establishment. The wonder is, that persons in menial situations continue any longer to accept "wages" as well as hospitality in return for their services. Any right-minded lady or nobleman could only construe such a pecuniary offer as an insult to their birth and breeding. And in the beautiful new century that is now approaching, we expect that individuals of whatever rank, even "generals," with any spark of gratitude and good feeling, will pay their mistresses a handsome premium, in addition to an annual fee, for the comfort, experience, distinction, and company of two children and a resident governess obtainable in quiet north-country seaside homes. What offers, ladies?

AT URUGUAY.—"An ex-policeman" attempted to stab the President. Providentially his design was frustrated. "An ex-policeman!" Ah! THACKERAY's "Policeman X." would never have behaved in so dastardly a manner.



AMBIGUOUS.

First Actress. "OH, MY DEAR, I'M FEELING SO CHIPPY! I THINK I SHALL SEND DOWN A DOCTOR'S CERTIFICATE TO-NIGHT, TO SAY I CAN'T ACT." *Second Ditto.* "SURELY A CERTIFICATE ISN'T NECESSARY, DEAR!"

TO THE CREW OF THE MARGATE SURF-BOAT, "FRIEND TO ALL NATIONS."

ALL night the pitiless blast had swept
Out of the North-East blind as hell;
Ere dawn, the sudden signal leapt,
Death's meteor-signal leapt and fell.

Then, as the cry for rescue rang,
With quick farewell to child and wife
Into the roaring surf they sprang
To yield their lives for the stranger life.

Friend to all Nations! Friend at need,
Where danger sets the task to do!
Not ill they chose a name to speed
The gallant craft of a gallant crew.

Stout hearts of Kent, that heard the call
Of man to man in the face of death!
Is this, is this the end of all—
These bodies dank with the salt sea's breath?

Nay, but their names shall stand in gold
When the opened books of God are read,
With deeds remembered and deeds untold
That wait till the sea gives up its dead!

APPROPRIATE ETON BOAT-SONG (as duet) FOR THE CHRISTMAS CRACKER SEASON.—*Pull, Pull Together!* with our compliments to the famed cracker-purveyors, Messrs. SPARAGNAPANE & Co.

RETAINED FOR THE DEFENCE.

[“Ladies are being enrolled as hon. members of a Volunteer Corps in Devonshire.”—*Daily Paper.*]

“AND so it was at Exeter that the first of us were enrolled as honorary members,” said the Major, looking into the glass and arranging a refractory curl.

“Yes,” returned the senior Captain, “and since then we have grown apace. Battalions all over the country, and a fair force of artillery.”

“Yes,” assented a Subaltern. “Actually that branch of the service became very popular on the introduction of noiseless powder.”

“Talking of noise,” said the Colonel, “don’t you think we could substitute a cottage for the grand piano in the orchestra?”

“Afraid not,” replied the chief of the Band Committee, “for we want something strong in strings to go with the harps.”

“Dear me!” exclaimed the chief, looking at the clock. “It’s time for parade. We must have missed the bugle call.”

“Yes, Ma’am, all our buglers are rather feeble in sounding. They cannot compare with our brothers of the line.”

“Then, ladies, fall in.”

“Which is better than falling out,” whispered the regimental wag. And a few moments later the members of the Amazon Rifle Volunteers appeared on parade.

“Hem!” commented the male military critic. “Smart! but what would they do in time of war?” Then, on consideration, he added, “It should be *sine quâ non* that only single recruits should be eligible, and they must have come safely out of at least two engagements.”



A BOUNDARY QUESTION.

JOHN BULL. "BEG PARDON, MONSIEUR! BUT P'RAPs YOU DIDN'T NOTICE *THAT BOARD!*"



NEW IMPERIAL "OCCUPATION."

THE GERMAN EMPEROR'S SEVENTH DEMAND IN HIS NOTE TO THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT IS "THE OCCUPATION OF KIAO-CHAU BY GERMANY AS A COALING STATION." MR. PUNCH WISHES WILLIAM, KAISER AND COAL-MERCHANT, EVERY SUCCESS IN HIS "COALING BUSINESS"—IF STRICTLY "LIMITED."

IN RE—PINKERTON'S INSURANCE.

PART I.—How Mr. Briefless, Junior accepted a Reference.

"I am going to ask you to do me a slight favour," said PINKERTON, "but if you grant it, it will confer a chronic blessing on my whole life."

I need scarcely say I was only too pleased to be of the slightest service to PINKERTON. He occupies chambers beneath those bearing my name (and others), and when I visit Pump Handle Court I usually run across him. He is considerably my junior, both in years and professional standing. This being so, I thought it possible he might wish to consult me.

"If you desire my counsel on the conduct of a consent brief—" I began.

"Oh, no, it's nothing of that sort," interrupted my learned friend. "The fact is, as I am going to be married I want to insure my life."

"A very proper thing to do," I said, heartily. "When undertaking the responsibilities of the married state, which are, in reality, bound by an expressed contract, it is desirable—"

"Yes, yes," again interrupted PINKERTON, "I know all that, but the fact is, in your unprofessional capacity I want you to do me a favour."

I was a little annoyed at my learned friend's tone. Although I do not appear in the Courts quite so frequently as I did in the days of my hot youth—yet as recently as shortly before the long vacation I was briefed to support an application for the appointment of a receiver in chambers—I am regarded, and I think rightly regarded, as a legal authority of weight in the bosom of my family. My maiden aunt, CAROLINE ADELAIDE, invariably consults me before adding (she has added several) a codicil to her will, and as for Uncle JACK—a most vigorous old gentleman of ninety-four—he keeps me quite busily employed in reading his letters to the Urban Council. My maiden Aunt, CAROLINE ADELAIDE, was—so she said—ininitely obliged to me for my

opinion on the probable validity of a legacy left to a parrot, and Uncle JACK was equally thankful when I prevented him from sending, as a privileged communication, his opinion in writing to the clerk of the U. C. agent the District Surveyor that that individual was a "blithering idiot," and what was worse—from a legal point of view—"tip receiver." Uncle JACK agreed with me, on recovering from his attack of gout, that his "privileged communication" would probably have landed him in Holloway. So I repeat, I was displeased with PINKERTON's tone—it savoured of disrespect.

"I am nothing if not professional," I said, with a grave smile. "Of course, I shall be only too pleased to serve you."

"Well, it's only to become my surety. The medical Johnny who examined me said I was right enough, but he must have a form filled in by a friend of some years' standing before he could recommend his board to accept me."

"I see," I returned. "I shall be very happy, but I am bound to say that I shall have to answer the questions put me with the nicest regard as to their truthfulness."

"I expect nothing less," said PINKERTON, in rather a nasty tone. "Of course, my dear fellow, I don't want you to tell a pack of lies, but still, if you have any hesitation about it I can easily get GEORGE DE PUTRE POTTE to—"

"Not at all," I replied, promptly. I don't like DE PUTRE POTTE. He suggests to my mind a donkey suffering from exaggerated self-complacency. And the matter was settled.

"You might give me a hint or two," I continued. "How did you get on with the examining doctor?"

"What, the medical Johnny? Oh, first rate. He weighed me, and said I was satisfactory to an ounce."

I was a little surprised at this, as PINKERTON is distinctly thin. I myself am only fifteen stone to five feet nine, and I am certainly portly as compared with my learned friend.

"Then he punched me in the chest and listened with a thing like one of those theatrical telephone-tubes to hear the echoes?"

"And was the condition of your lungs to his satisfaction?"

"Eminently—he said I was as sound as a bell. Then he made me hop about the room on one leg like a demented duck."

"I see. No doubt to test the muscles of your foot." I have some knowledge of anatomy.

"Probably. Then he listened for the music again, and declared my heart to be perfection. I was very pleased, as, to tell the truth, I had rather worried myself by reading *The Dictionary of the Incurable*, by Doctor ZERO."

"Unquestionably a text-book of commanding importance."

"So I thought until I found that I had the symptoms of fifteen fatal diseases, of which two thirds should terminate abruptly within a week."

"I need scarcely say that your apprehension was not realised?" I am apt sometimes to become unconsciously a cross-examiner.

"You are perfectly right in that assumption. I am still alive, and if I may believe the medical Johnny, have no need to make my will for the next twenty years. In fact, as the doctor bade me adieu, he predicted that I would be on the books of the company until I was eighty."

"Distinctly satisfactory."

"So I thought. So, my dear fellow, when the form arrives, fill it in according to the dictates of your conscience."

"That I assuredly will," I returned, heartily, as I wrung PINKERTON's hand warmly. "I am confident that all will be well."

"I would be grieved beyond measure if I did not share in that belief," said my learned friend. "ALICE is the dearest girl alive."

And then PINKERTON gave me a detailed account of how, when, and where he had met his fiancée, and other details—from his point of view—of an interesting character. At length he left me, and I turned my attention to my notes upon a book I contemplate writing some day, to be called, *From the Gown of the Student to the Chancellor's Wig*, with the sub-title of *The Experiences of a Practising Barrister*, when my admirable and excellent clerk PORTINGTON entered the room.

"I think, Sir, this is something more than a circular," he said.

I allow my valued assistant a certain latitude in the selection of documents to be destroyed or preserved.

"Thank you," I replied, and then I opened an envelope bearing a type-written name and address. I glanced at the contents. A form to be filled in about the health of PINKERTON. I read the questions more carefully, and my mind became much disturbed. They were distinctly of an embarrassing character. How I replied to them, and what was the effect of my answers must be reserved for another chapter.

Pump-Handle Court. (Signed) A. BRIEFLESS, JUNIOR.

December 1, 1897.



SOME "SIDE-SHOWS" WHICH MESSRS. BARNUM AND BAILEY SHOULD NOT OMIT AT OLYMPIA.

[Among the animals at Olympia are some which are curious freaks of nature... The most singular of these is Jo-Jo, who is a union of a perfect with an imperfect human organism."—*Times*.]

SONGS FOR THE NATION.

"Anybody may make the laws of a nation, let me make its songs."—*Shakspeare, or Somebody.*

Drinking Songs.—The drinking song is a necessity of human nature, but a great deal may be done to guide it (the song) into proper channels. I would catch the thoughtless with guile by preserving the time-honoured tone, while pointing out a more excellent way. Notice the sort of *crescendo* in moral purpose which culminates in the third verse of the specimen given. When singing this song, proceed warily, and omit the third verse if you observe symptoms of discontent. It may even be advisable to stop short at the first, but be assured that the serious element must prevail in the long run.

BACCHANALIAN.

Come, jolly toppers, one and all,
Together we will stand or fall,
Fill up the radiant bowl with wine,
And lemonade that's half divine:
Our hearts are light, our spirits free,
So here's to you and here's to me.

Chorus.

Every man-jack of us reeling with jollity,
Now is the moment for utter frivolity,
Not to be jolly is most reprehensible,
Hang any villain who dares to be sensible!
Gaze on the liquor surpassingly fair,
Drink of the claret-cup radiant and rare,
Hurrah!

But lo! amid our frantic cheers
A medicated wine appears.
A tonic is a thing of might,
Of ecstasy and pure delight.
The finest drugs, the choicest steel
To every British heart appeal.

Chorus.

Wine that is useful for gout and paralysis.
Wine that has stood every test of analysis
Wine that will save you from hopeless
 inanity,
Ring out its praise to the verge of insanity,
Fie on the fogies who call you a beast,
Drink to the dregs half-a-teaspoon at least!
Hurrah!

Encore verse.

What, ho! The tonic, too, retires,
And "pales its ineffectual fires"
Before the very prince of drinks,
From which the nerveless milksop shrinks.
No heel-taps, boys, mock care and toil
In lovely Norway's golden oil!

Chorus.

Cod liver oil, boys! oh, the delight of it!
Cod liver oil! we will all make a night of it!
Cod liver oil! it is making a man of you,
Phosphates are good for the whole jolly
 clan of you,
Weak little stomachs may turn from the
 treat,
We will insist upon having it neat.
Hurrah!

A General Question of Stop-it.

Determined Foxhunter (to Determined Game-preserver). Why should you stop earths?

Determined Game-preserver. Why should you stop shooting?

[And then they get angry, both being two of the best fellows in the world. So Mr. Punch suggests a full stop after each of the queries.]



TRIALS OF A NOVICE.

The Boy (to Brown, who has just taken a "little place" in the Country). "PLAZE, ZUR, WOT SE I TO START ON?"

Brown. "OH—ER—ER—LET'S SEE— OH, CONFOUND IT!—ER—ER—MAKE A BONFIRE!"

THE PLETHORA OF BOOKS.

(By an Intermittent Author.)

[Mr. LESLIE STEPHEN, in *Literature*, advocates that books should be printed on perihable materials, on account of the vastly-increasing publishers' output.]

TO-DAY the Caliph OMAR's robe
On LESLIE STEPHEN has descended;
With other writers' works offended,
He's turned a bitter bibliophobe.

He'd have them, ere a hundred years
Elapse, or sooner, wholly perish;
No libraries need longer cherish
The toil of scribes and sonneteers.

Nay, *percant qui ante nos*
Dixere nostra is my feeling
On SHAKESPEARE and his tribe for stealing
My masterpieces by the gross!

How can one write when ev'rything
Worth writing has been writ already?
How can the stream continue steady,
Yet fresh, of annual "Odes to Spring"?

My sympathy I freely lend
To prosy rivals and poetic—

I'd print in ink that's *sympathetic*
Each of their works from end to end!

Why can't some law obliterate
All books that ever have been printed?
Then, as I previously have hinted,
My *magnum opus* I'd create!

MOTOR CAR-ACTERISTICS.

(By an Old Whip.)

JERKING and jolting,
Bursting and bolting,
Smelling and steaming,
Shrieking and screaming,
Snorting and shaking,
Quivering, quaking,
Skidding and slipping,
Twisting and tripping,
Bumping and bounding,
Puffing and pounding,
Rolling and rumbling,
Thumping and tumbling.
Such I've a notion,
Motor-car motion.

SUITABLE DECORATIONS FOR HERE
ANDREE'S WINTER HOME.—A freeze.



'INTS ON 'UNTING, BY 'ARRY.

SIT WELL BACK AT YOUR FENCES!

SEASONABLE LITERATURE.

THE LAST CHAPTER OF A CHRISTMAS NUMBER. (1837.)

"HARRY," said Sir JASPER, with a sob strangely foreign to his wonted lack of feeling, "you must forgive me. I don't deserve it, I know. Through forty-seven pages my ingenious schemes have kept you and your MARY apart, and if that missing will hadn't turned up, I should have won the game. But you won't be hard on a poor old villain, HARRY, my boy? There's only a page or two more, so you can afford to be generous. And, if my words are weak, that sound will reach your heart—the sound of Christmas bells!"

He flung open the window as he spoke, and the chimes from the sweet old village church sounded merrily across the snow-covered fields.

"JASPER," answered HARRY, in impressive tones, "I forgive you. If, indeed, I followed my natural inclination, I should throw you out of window. But no true hero in a Christmas number was ever yet

unmoved by the sound of church bells in the last chapter. I forgive you, and MARY forgives me, and we forgive everybody else, and it's away with melancholy, and up with the holly, and let's be jolly. There's only a page more to fill, and we'll end the story in the proper way. To-night will the dear old Hall re-echo with mirth and happiness, and the elders will unbend and become young again. Excuse me now. We dine at six, and I must drink a gallon of milk-punch before then."

"I thank you!" cried Sir JASPER. "Now that you've foiled all my schemes, I was sure you'd forgive me. My regards to Miss MARY, and after a few glasses of hot brandy-and-water, I'll step round to the Hall."

And that night they revelled in the most thorough-going style. All of them were there, the hero HARRY, and the heroine MARY, and the villain JASPER, together with the old-fashioned uncle, the humorous mother-in-law, and lots of other characters who have been mentioned incidentally in the story, and long since forgotten. Every one of them turned up for the old-fashioned

Christmas revel. And there was roast beef, and mistletoe, and Sir Roger de Coverley, and snapdragon, and blind-man's buff, and ghost stories, and love-making, and, above all, gallons and gallons of punch. Not till every drop of the latter was finished did the company disperse. Finally they left in pairs, to be married next morning, and to live happily ever after, which is the only proper way of finishing up an old-fashioned Christmas number.

THE SAME CHAPTER. (1897.)

At the window of the foulest garret in the slums of London (for full description, *vide* previous pages), HARRY the hero stood and twiddled his thumbs. With a languid interest he watched a cat in the yard lick its paw, and miaow twice. Then he turned to his companion and regarded him curiously.

"JASPER," he said, with a yawn, "don't you think we might as well end somewhere here?"

"Just as you like," answered JASPER, who was sitting on a dust-heap in the far corner. "It really doesn't matter where we stop in a story of this kind, one place does as well as another."

"There isn't much to go on with," replied HARRY, thoughtfully chewing a piece of string. "Now that you've murdered MARY, and all the others are disposed of, it's about time to finish. I can't go on talking to you for many more pages."

"Why not?" JASPER replied. "We can always fill up the gaps with 'dreary silences.' Surely you don't hate me?"

HARRY sighed. "Nobody hates in modern stories—that is far too strong an emotion. But, as you've killed my fiancée, besides murdering three other characters, and driving five more to suicide, I do slightly dislike you. Here's the poison bottle, and there's just enough left for us both. You're sure none of the others are left out by mistake? How about that costermonger mentioned on the second page?"

"Sent to penal servitude," responded JASPER. "And his wife has gone mad in consequence, and killed off three minor characters who weren't accounted for. As you say, we may as well stop; we've provided a splendid story for a modern Christmas number. Pass the poison bottle when you've taken your share. And don't forget to make a vague remark just before you die—readers expect it."

HARRY nodded, and having consumed a pint of pure prussic acid, handed the remainder to JASPER, who quickly swallowed the rest.

For a few moments there was silence. Then HARRY sat up.

"Why didn't he boil the butter?" he murmured.

Then there was a dreary silence.

ALL THE DIFFERENCE.—The *Daily News* published an article, which, under the title of "Rowing and Rowing Men," reviewed the fourth volume of the Isthmian Library, by Messrs. R. C. LEHMANN, GUY NICKALLS, and others, under the able editorship—or editorboat, in this instance—of Mr. B. FLETCHER ROBINSON. There is a Crum of comfort in it for Etonians; and E. G. BLACKMORE interests us in Australian eights. But the title of the book is misleading, for "Rowing and Rowing Men" suggests a comparison between "the Rowing Men" or "Rowdies" of a past generation and the temperate and quiet Rowing Men, *i.e.*, oarsmen, of to-day.

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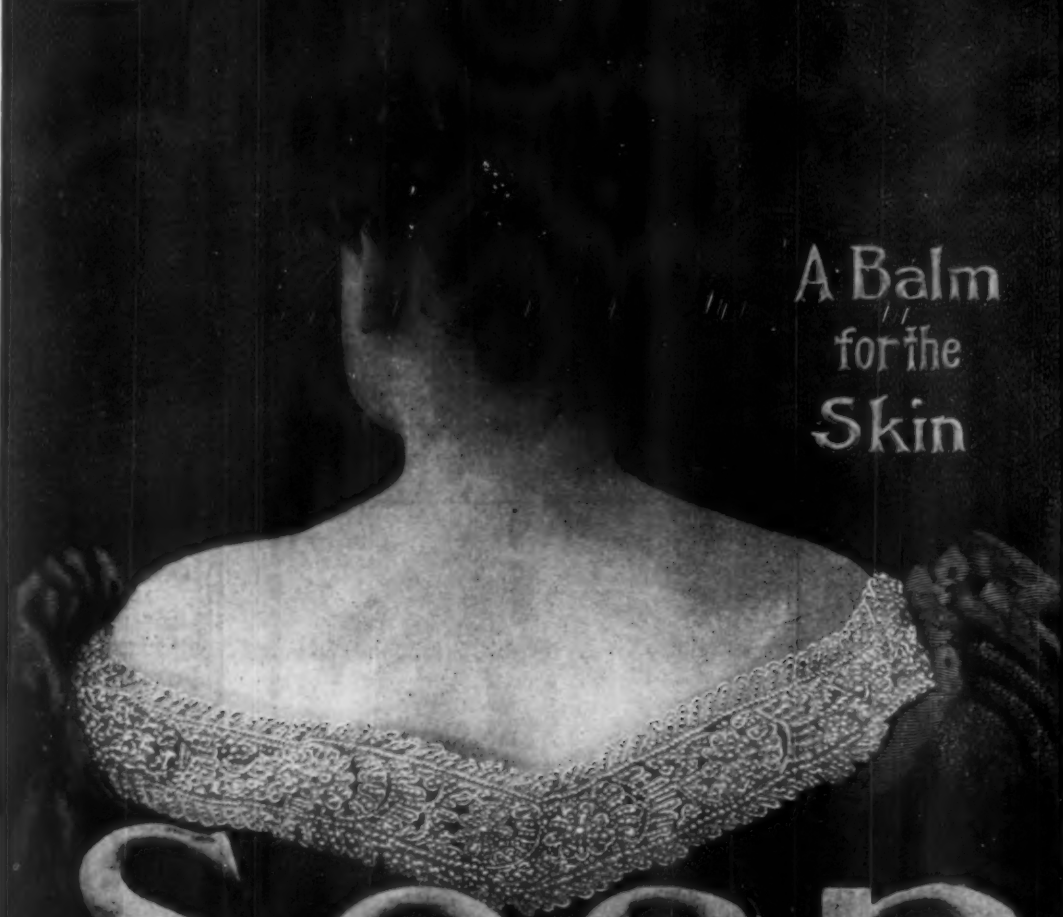
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